

A
LETTER

TO

William Pulteney, Esq,

CONCERNING

The Administration of Affairs in
Great Britain for several Years
passed, and the present State
thereof, with Observations on
our polemical Writers.

*Unus Homo nobis cunctando restituit Rem ;
Non ponebat enim Rumores ante Salutem ;
Ergo postq; magisq; Viri nunc Gloria claret.*

Ennius.



L O N D O N :

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A

LETTER TO Mr. PULTENEY.

S I R,



S the Character of a Patriot is that which you seem most enamoured with, and most assiduous to gain, I doubt not but this Enquiry into the Administration of our Affairs will be grateful to you, since it is made with Impartiality, and with a View to clear the Innocent from many injurious Reflections which have been cast upon them, and to shew the Guilty in a proper Light. Facts faithfully related, and just Reasoning on them, are the only Means to bring the inquisitive, and the prejudiced,

to a right Sense of Things; Declamation has as often cast a deceitful Gloss over Falshood as it has been assistant to Truth; I shall therefore chiefly follow the first Method, viz. that of relating Facts faithfully, and of justly reasoning on them, in order to answer the End proposed in this small Tract. Without detaining you by any farther Introduction, I proceed to the Work in Hand.

The Duty of our Ministry is to embrace every Opportunity of adding to the Interest of their Country, and to watch the Motions of neighbouring Powers, in order to defeat them, if tending towards any Encroachments upon our foreign or domestick Rights. Let us take a Survey of publick Transactions, as they regard ourselves, for some Years passed, and we shall soon see how the present Ministry have discharged the Trust reposed in them: and if, upon an impartial Examination into their Conduct, we find they have been, by no means, deficient, I hope you will join with me in acknowledging the Applauses and Gratitude due to their Care and Vigilance; but if they appear to have neglected Occasions of advancing the Interest of their Country, and to have suffered other Powers to injure us, without Opposition, I shall be as forward in joining their publick Condemnation as any one.

As the Measures of the Administration have been largely and sufficiently justified, to a certain Period of Time, in the *Enquiry* of
a worthy

a worthy and able Writer, and in his *Defence* thereof, I shall go no farther backwards than to the Treaty of *Vienna*, betwixt the *Emperor* and the *King of Spain*, in the Year 1725.

The *Emperor* and the *King of Spain* were firmly united against us, by the Treaty of *Vienna*, in the Year 1725; the Means by which the first proposed to distress us was by protecting the *Ostend-East-India-Company*: what a considerable Branch of our Trade would have been injured, if not cut off at last, by so powerful a Rival, every one, who has any Knowledge of our Commerce, is sensible of; and the Voice of the Nation was, and still is, for the Preservation of *Gibraltar* to us; by besieging which *Spain* annoyed us. In this dreadful Circumstance, thus attacked by two potent Princes, let us inspect into the Behaviour of our Ministry. They wisely avoided a War with these two Potentates, not knowing how *France* might convert it to her Advantage; and at the same Time they were sure, if we declared War, that two fruitful Branches of our Trade must have been a while suspended; nor could a War be prosecuted without great Expence of Blood and Treasure: the Ministry therefore chose to strike up an Alliance with *France*, as the first Step towards dividing the *Emperor* and the *King of Spain*; which had the desired Effect; how unjust therefore the Clamours against such a Proceeding were, the Consequence declares.

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The *Emperor* and the *King* of *Spain* were divided ; what necessary Arts were used I have no Occasion to enquire after ; the Intent was answered by a Suspension of the *Ostend-Company* ; and *Gibraltar*, after a long and furious Siege, was freed from the Attacks of *Spain*.

These are known Truths : an extensive Branch of our Trade was in Danger of being invaded ; which the Prudence of the Ministry prevented. A favourite Garrison was besieged, which the same Prudence preserved. The greatest ill Consequence of this Siege was the Obstruction to Part of our Trade, by the Seizures committed by the *Spaniards* upon some of our Merchant-Ships.

We will now look into the Conduct of the Ministry in Regard to the freeing *Gibraltar* from the Assaults of *Spain*, and to the obtaining a Freedom of Trade to the Merchants, and Reparation for their Losses. The Treaty of *Seville*, signed in *November* 1729, was the only Remedy ; which was proposed as a mutual Advantage to both *England* and *Spain*. The profitable Articles to *England* are many, and those relating peculiarly to *Spain* not in the least interfering with our Interest. That I may not be accused of asserting without proving, I beg leave briefly to recite the most material Articles. In the third and fourth Articles Commerce is fixed on the Treaties made before the Year 1725, which
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secure the Trade of the *English* to *America* ; and the King of *Spain* therein agrees that no Article shall subsist betwixt the *Emperor* and himself, in the Treaty of *Vienna*, repugnant to antecedent Treaties of Commerce with *England*. In the fifth, and sixth, Articles Reparations are stipulated to *England* for Damages sustained since the Time prescribed for the Cessation of Hostilities ; and Commissaries are appointed by *Great Britain* and *Spain* to inspect into Damages, and to make Reports of them. The seventh Article regards *France* and *Spain*. The ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth, all relate to the Settlement of *Don CARLOS* in the *Italian* Dominions ; in which *Great Britain* and *France* are mentioned as Guarantees for the Settlement of *Don CARLOS*.

Here is a faithful State of the Profits arising to us, and of those arising to *Spain*, from this Treaty. The Profits arising to us are the Abolition of the Treaty of *Vienna* in the Year 1725, a fresh Confirmation of former advantageous Treaties of Commerce, and a Security of Reparation for Damages sustained by Seizures. The Interest, on the other Side, proposed to *Spain*, is the Settlement of *Don CARLOS* in the *Italian* Dominions ; which can, by no means, be an Infringement on any of the Rights of *Great Britain* ; nor possibly can it hurt us, especially since the *Emperor* has declared in Favour of it.

France

France you are to observe, Sir, was originally one of the Parties of this Treaty; and the *Dutch* soon acceded to it. What on this Occasion had the Enemies of the Administration to quarrel with? First they foretold a bloody War in *Italy*, by an Invasion of the *Emperor's* Dominions; which Invasion, they said, would set us all together by the Ears; but, to the great Disappointment of the *Craftsman*, and his Patrons, by whom this Suggestion was first started, the *Emperor* has lately acceded to the Settlement of *Don CARLOS*. This Bone of Contention is removed; and Disgrace attends those who precipitately prophesied a War in *Italy*. I will not dispute whether their foreboding Spirit proceeded only from an Enmity to the Ministry, or from wrong Judgement only, or from a Mixture of both; it is sufficient to me that it was a lying Spirit: which the *Craftsman* himself has lately proved it to be by faithfully publishing a Fact in Opposition to his former Prediction. Says this Author, who, I hope, may be credited against himself, * *the Differences with Spain on account of the Investiture of Parma and Placentia, the Act of Dispensation and Title of Grand Prince of Tuscany, in Favour of the serene Infante Don CARLOS, are all on the Point of being determined by the Mediation of Great Britain, to the entire Satisfaction of the Courts of Spain and Florence, yet in such a Manner as to preserve the imperial Authority and Rights of the Empire untouched.* This is a strong

* In the *Craftsman*, April 21, 1733.

strong Instance of the Influence of his *Britannick* Majesty in foreign Affairs, and of the Weight and Success of our Negotiations abroad.

All that they now make the Subject of Objection in this Treaty is, the Delay with which the Commissaries meet, in obtaining Reparation for Damages. This has lately been answer'd, as I am credibly inform'd, in the House of Commons, to the Satisfaction of every candid Person; and, the Time being then fixed for the Reports to be made, every one concerned therein must wait, with Patience, till the Time comes: in the mean while we see, notwithstanding the Insolence of the *Guarda Costas* some Time since, an uninterrupted Commerce secured to us, and no Broils but what take their Birth from a disappointed and turbulent Faction at Home. Let us ask ourselves the Question, with whom are we at Variance? The *Dutch* are our salt Friends; and we are on good Terms with the Emperor. About this Time twelve-month Count *Zinzendorf*, Plenipotentiary from the Emperor, and the Minister from the King of *Great Britain*, exchanged their Ratifications of Alliance, with those of their *High-Mightinesses*, at the *Hague*. The *French* have no Inclination to quarrel with us, because they find it is not their Interest so to do; Hostilities are ceased on the Part of *Spain*; the Merchant enjoys a free Trade; and the Commissaries are discharging their Duty with what Expedition they can; nor

were we backward, while the *Guarda Costas* were troublesome to us, in making Reprisals ; for several of them were destroy'd near *Jamaica* and other Places. About a Year since, Admiral *Stewart*, according to his Instructions, summoned the Merchants, in a Court of Admiralty, in *Jamaica*, to prove their Losses by *Guarda Costas* ; and he sent two Ships, after having received their Proofs, one to the Governor of *Campechey*, and the other to the *Havanna*, to demand Restitution, threatening that, if it was refused, he would make Reprisals for Depredations ; and a *Spanish* Merchant Vessel was taken near *Campechey*, and carry'd into *South-Carolina*, as a Reprisal, by the *Deal-Castle* Man of War, Captain *Aubin* Commander ; which Conduct proved satisfactory to the Colonies in the *West-Indies*, and has so much abated the Fury of the *Guarda Costas*, that Hostilities are quite ceased. About the same Time, the Ministers of *Great Britain* and *Holland* complained to the Empress of *Russia*, that the Governor of *Archangel* had, on several Pretences, hinder'd some of their Ships from departing, to the great Detriment of the Merchants ; and they obtained a Promise, from her Imperial Majesty, of Satisfaction. Mr. *Keene*, the *British* Minister at *Seville*, complained some Time last *August*, at that Court, of the Difficulties which the Garrison of *Gibraltar* found in being supplied with Provisions ; in Consequence of which Complaint, the King of *Spain* gave an Order to the Governors of *Andalusia*, *Granada*, and other neighbouring

neighbouring Coasts, to grant the *English* the Liberty of procuring what Provisions they want. These, Sir, are stubborn Facts, which loudly proclaim the Vigilance of our Ministry, over different Parts of the Globe, for the Interest of the Nation. Now we have taken a short View of their Care in Foreign Affairs, let us turn our Eyes upon their Conduct at Home.

First, let us add to the good Account of the Ministry the Decrease of the National Debt ; which is considerably lessened since those Gentlemen who are now at the Head of the Treasury have been there ; which naturally tends to the Decrease of our Taxes. I must here, Sir, call upon you to reflect on the Folly, or Wickedness, of those who were clamorous against pacifick Measures with *Spain*, and tumultuous against the Change of the Customs of Tobacco and Wine into Inland Duties. They who were against pacifick Measures with *Spain* did not, I doubt, consider that the heavy Debt now on the Nation was contracted by a long expensive War, and that if another War should commence, especially a Land War, the Debt would rise proportionably to the Length and Expence of the War, or heavier Taxes must be laid on the People to support it, which, either Way, instead of a Decrease, would render an Increase of Taxes necessary : if they considered these Consequences of a War, they could oppose those pacifick Measures only from a Pique to the Person, or Persons, who propo-

fed them : one of the two, either Want of Consideration, or Malice, must be their Motive to Opposition. They who stood up against the Change of the Customs of Tobacco and Wine into Inland Duties, may be divided into three Classes ; the first are those Traders who have large Profits from an Evasion of the Payment of Part of the Duties by Custom ; the second are those who did not understand the Subject, who were apprehensive of Dangers where none really were, and who did not see the good Consequences attending the Change ; the third are those who are resolved to oppose every Measure of the present Administration. Here the Folly and Wickedness of different Kinds of Men are conspicuous. Such a Change would not only have contributed to the Decrease of the National Debt, but might have been the Forerunner of the Cessation of some Taxes now heavy on the Poor, such as those on Candles and Soap, not to mention the Advantages which would have arose to the poor laborious Planters in our Colonies abroad, who are not to be excluded, I hope, the Number of *British* Subjects ; their Distance from us does not render them less Objects of the Care of the Legislature ; and I believe them to be not the least useful to their King and Country ; and I might here insist on the Conveniencies which would arise to us at Home, from having some Commodities purer than perhaps we now have them : these are additional Advantages to those which would have arose from the Security of the better Payment of the

the Duties laid on Tobacco and Wine : therefore I think the Ministry inexcusable for giving up, to Noise and Faction, a Project so visibly beneficial to the Publick ; but I hope that the Design is not absolutely laid aside, and that the Execution of it only is pro-
 rogu'd. Allow me, Sir, in this Place to take Notice, since I have here mention'd the Duties upon Candle, and Soap, that those Duties were not laid on the People by the present Ministry, who are, I doubt not, reserved as Instruments to ease them of that Burthen, with which they were loaded by other Hands.

Besides the Means used for lessening the Debts of the Nation, all proper Methods have been taken, among the Bills which passed last Sessions of Parliament, 1732, for securing our Trade to the *East-Indies*, and for the better Improvement of the Woollen Manufactory, and other Branches of Commerce ; and many Grievances in the Law have been lately redressed, which were before very vexatious ; but as the Ministry do not arrogate all the Glory of these laudable Acts to themselves, I shall not presume to impute it to them ; but this I will venture to affirm, that the chief Merit of lowering the National Debt resides in the Person who is at the Head of the Treasury, the Direction of which is principally lodged in him : and there is more true Honour and Patriotism in contributing, by a prudent and upright Management, to the Decrease of the Nation's Debts, than
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in all the loud Harangues in Parliament which some Persons pride themselves in, and which they call Opposition to Power. The Decrease of the Debts of the Nation must consequently be attended with the Decrease of Taxes, which proportionably encreases the Ease of the People.

It would be a long, though not difficult, Task, and beside my present Purpose, to trace the Ministry through every Step which they have taken to the Advantage of the Publick, both in their foreign and domestick Negotiations ; my main Intent, in taking this concise View of our Affairs, is to shew that we are brought, by a judicious Administration, to a State of Tranquility with all neighbouring Princes and States ; and that every Thing is done that can be done, or that is reasonable for the Publick to expect, for the Security and Advantage of Property at Home : here I am afraid that one Exception may be made, which is, the absolute Necessity of the Duties on Tobacco and Wine being turned into Inland Duties ; but the Want of this beneficial Act is not to be charged on the Ministry, but on the Clamours of an outrageous and giddy Faction, in which, Sir, I am sorry to be inform'd, that you bore so large a Share as I hear you did.

If we are in the happy Situation in which I have represented ourselves to be, and which every *Englishman* will find to be our Case, if
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he will examine into Facts with the same Candour that I have done, what do those Wretches deserve who are daily traducing the King and his Ministry as acting destructive to the Interest of the People? They deserve, at least, a Condemnation to perpetual Silence, or Banishment from that happy Government under which they cannot live easy. I am here naturally brought to consider some of the ill Effects of particular polemical Writings, and the Enormities of the Writers.

Near two Years since, it was asserted in publick Print, and some say by a Patron of the *Craftsman*, that *the Laws must be destroyed before a particular Person can escape*. In my Opinion, the Miscreant that is capable of making such a Declaration, and at the same Time taking Pains to point out whom he means, without advancing one Argument for so impudent, and equally foolish, Assertion, ought to have a more than ordinary Restraint laid upon him. The great Man doubtless, who is conscious of the Unjustness of the Slander, makes the Malice and Envy of the Writer the Subjects of his Mirth, and the Author the Object of his Contempt, when he condescends to give him a Place in his Thoughts. Notwithstanding the Lenity of the Person thus dishonourably abused, the Offender ought not to go unpunished, who, contrary to all Rules of Morality and Religion, will stop at no Baseness to indulge the violent and abject Passions of his Soul; nor should his being a bad Writer screen him from

from the Notice of Men of superior Talents, no more than the Meanness of a Felon or a Murderer ought to protect them from the Sentence of the Laws. Some good-natured People say that such an one should be regarded and pitied as a Fool or a Madman; but this is a Plea which ought not to be admitted, since *Solomon* has wisely pointed out a Punishment for the first, and *Bedlam* always is open for the Reception of the latter.

Among our polemical Writers there is one * Sort whose Business is to abuse the Memory of the dead for the sake of traducing the living: they give Characters to departed Heroes which, no Way, belong to them, because there happens to be some Affinity in the Offices which they filled, or some other Particulars of their Lives, with some Persons living: so the dead are branded with an Oidium for the sake of casting it on those who are alive: and these People sometimes give true Characters of some Men of Eminence in passed Days, and then, by an unjust constrained Parallel, apply it to some-body in these Times. Thus, by corrupting History, they are guilty of misleading their Readers into wrong Notion, of former Times, and of Persons long since in the Dust; and they infuse into them, by such Means, partial Sentiments of Men of Worth their Cotemporaries. This is a Crime of a complicated Nature, and which discovers

* The Author of *Oldcastle's* Remarks in the *Craftsman*, and of several other Papers.

discovers a lying Head, and a mischievous Heart.

We have one, among our polemical Writers *, who, after an horrid Abuse of Power, fled his Country, and who, after repeated Acts of Treachery to different Parties, and after as many Shiftings and Turnings as *Proteus* is feigned to have used, obtained Leave to return to his native Land; and, after his Return, this very Person was inflamed with the same Desire of Power which he had before villainously abused; and because the King and those in the Administration did not think him so proper a Person, as he thought himself, to make one among them, he immediately became one of the *Craftsman's* † Patrons, and threw about his Dirt with a lavish Hand, in Hopes of blackening some other Persons so much that he might at last be less conspicuous himself, and so lost in the Croud: but this illustrious Person was soon pointed out, and set in his proper Light, by the Author of the *Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his two honourable Patrons, &c.* The Punishment which I would prescribe for this Person, if it could be without hurting any but himself, is that he should be always fluctuating from Side to Side, and in the restless State of vain Hope, without ever having any one of his Ends answered.

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Now,

* The Author of a *final Answer to the Remarks of the Craftsman's Vindication, &c.*

† See the *Craftsman's Vindication of his two Patrons.*

Now, Sir, permit me to take Notice of the most extraordinary of our polemical Writers, the Author of a silly, scolding, abusive, and treasonable, Pamphlet, called *an Answer to one Part of a late infamous Libel, intituled Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his two honourable Patrons, &c.* In this Libel the Author not only belies the Minister in many Assertions, but tells a Heap of gossiping Stories about what the King said to such a one, and what such a one said to the King, which upon a strict Examination appears to be as opposite to Truth as Light is to Darkness: he frets and foams, and rants and raves, 'till he is quite giddy with lying and scolding: but, to be serious on this Author, I am informed, and credibly informed, that he rose to considerable Employments under the Patronage of the Minister whom he chiefly makes the Subject of his Slander: I am likewise told that the same Person grew amiable in the Eye of his Country, and increased in her Affection, by being supported by that Minister: his Country thought him to be a Man of Worth, because he was the Care of so prudent and worthy a Man: so the Honours which were paid to him were properly paid to his Friend, whose Interest procured those Honours. What, Sir, shall we say to such a Man as this, who, because he could not have what was not fit for him to have, flew in the Face of him who gave him what he had: nay, he is said to go farther, and to set himself up as one of the Patrons of those

those Writers who endeavour to perplex publick Affairs with all their Might, and who raise such a Ferment through the Land as is scarcely to be laid but by Force. To speak soberly of this Person, I think he must be numbered among the worst of Men; but, if I was inclined to be ludicrous, I would wish him no worse than to continue scribbling and publishing such wretched Pieces as his *Answer to one Part of the Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his two honourable Patrons, &c.* which would sufficiently expose him to Ridicule. This Person is thought to have behaved so very ill that it is reckoned almost impossible that the best of Princes should ever forgive him. I think I have said enough of this polemical Writer, and indeed of the rest, to raise Contempt and Detestation of them in every honest Breast; and it is really impossible to think of them, and at the same Time judge rightly, without despising and abhorring them, as Nuisances and Disturbers of Society.

Having answered the End which I proposed, *viz.* of placing our Affairs, as they have been conducted for some Years passed, and as they now stand, in a short and clear Light, and having shewn some of the ill Effects of the most pernicious Sort of our polemical Writings, and the Spirit of the Authors, I beg Leave to conclude with the Words of a *Roman* Statesman, which I doubt not but you understand, and which are proper to be inculcated into the Minds of all,
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who have, or may have, any Share in the Administration of the Affairs of a Nation. *Omnino qui Reipublicæ præfuturi sunt duo Platonis Præcepta teneant; unum, ut Utilitatem Civium sic tueantur ut, quæcunque agunt, ad eam referant, obliti Commodorum suorum; alterum, ut totum Corpus Reipublicæ curent, ne, dum Partem aliquam tuentur, Reliquas deserant. Cic. Offic.*

The END.

